

CHAPTER 61
GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

[Prior to IAB 3/14/84, subject appeared in Chs 12 and 15]

[Prior to 11/5/86, Merit Employment Department[570]]

[Prior to 1986, see Executive Council[420]Ch 10]

[Prior to 1/21/04, see 581—Ch 12]

11—61.1(80GA,ch145) Grievances. The grievance procedure is an informal process. It is not a contested case. All employees shall have the right to file grievances. The right to file a grievance and the grievance procedure provided for in these rules shall be made known and available to employees throughout the agency by the appointing authority through well-publicized means. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement may use this grievance procedure for issues that are not covered by their respective collective bargaining agreements.

Grievances shall state the issues involved, the relief sought, the date the incident or violation took place and any rules involved, and shall be filed on forms prescribed by the director. Grievances involving suspension, reduction in pay within the same pay grade, disciplinary demotion, or discharge shall be filed as appeals in accordance with subrule 61.2(6) and commence with Step 3 of the grievance procedure described in subrule 61.1(1).

Employees covered by collective bargaining agreements shall be governed by the terms of their contract grievance procedures for those provisions contained in the contract. Otherwise, the provisions of this rule shall apply.

61.1(1) *Grievance procedure.*

a. Step 1. The grievant shall initiate the grievance by submitting it in writing to the immediate supervisor, or to a supervisor designated by the appointing authority, within 14 calendar days following the day the grievant first became aware of, or should have through the exercise of reasonable diligence become aware of, the grievance issue. The immediate supervisor shall, within seven calendar days after the day the grievance is received, attempt to resolve the grievance within the bounds of these rules and give a decision in writing to the grievant with a copy to the director.

b. Step 2. If the grievant is not satisfied with the decision obtained at the first step, the grievant may, within seven calendar days after the day the written decision at the first step is received or should have been received, file the grievance in writing with the appointing authority. The appointing authority shall, within seven calendar days after the day the grievance is received, attempt to resolve the grievance within the bounds of these rules, by affirming, modifying, or reversing the decision made at the first step, or otherwise grant appropriate relief. The decision shall be given to the grievant in writing with a copy to the director.

c. Step 3. If the grievant is not satisfied with the decision obtained at the second step, the grievant may, within 7 calendar days after the day the written decision at the second step was received, or should have been received, file the grievance in writing with the director. The director shall, within 30 calendar days after the day the grievance is received, attempt to resolve the grievance and send a decision in writing to the grievant with a copy to the appointing authority. The director may affirm, modify, or reverse the decision made at the second step or otherwise grant appropriate relief. If the relief sought by the grievant is not granted, the director's response shall inform the grievant of the appeal rights in subrule 61.2(5).

d. If the grievant is not satisfied with the decision obtained from the third step the grievant may file an appeal in accordance with subrule 61.2(5).

61.1(2) *Exceptions to time limits.*

a. If the grievant fails to proceed to the next available step in the grievance procedure within the prescribed time limits, the grievant shall have waived any right to proceed further in the grievance procedure and the grievance shall be considered settled.

b. If any management representative fails to comply with the prescribed time limits at any step in the grievance procedure, the grievant may proceed to the next available step.

c. The maximum time periods at any of the three steps in the grievance procedure may be extended when mutually agreed to in writing by both parties.

61.1(3) *Group grievances.* When the appointing authority or the director determines that two or more grievances or grievants address the same or similar issues, they shall be processed and decided as a group grievance.

61.1(4) *Grievance meetings.*

a. When it is determined by a designated management representative or the director that a meeting with the grievant will be held, all reasonable attempts will be made to hold the meeting during the grievant's regularly scheduled hours of work.

b. The grievant may be represented at a grievance meeting by an employee of the grievant's choosing except where that would constitute a conflict of interest. A grievant who wishes to be represented and whose class is covered by a collective bargaining agreement may only be represented by an appointed or elected union representative from the same employee organization as the grievant. A grievant who wishes to be represented and whose class is not covered by a collective bargaining agreement may only be represented by an employee with the same bargaining status as the grievant.

c. The grievant, an employee who is the grievant's representative, and employees authorized to attend the grievance meeting by the appointing authority or the director shall be in paid status for that time spent at and traveling to and from the grievance meeting during their regularly scheduled hours of work. In addition, employees shall, if eligible for overtime compensation, be in paid status for that time spent at and traveling to and from the grievance meeting outside of their regularly scheduled hours of work.

d. The appointing authority shall not authorize mileage, or the use of a state vehicle for employees to attend or participate in a grievance meeting, except for those employees who are required to attend or participate in the meeting by the appointing authority or the director. In the case of group grievances, only one of the grievants shall be in paid status.

61.1(5) *Bypassing steps for discrimination grievances.* A grievance step may be bypassed by the grievant when the grievance alleges discrimination and the respondent at the step is the person against whom the grievance has been filed.

11—61.2(80GA,ch145) Appeals.**61.2(1) *Appeal of position classification decisions.***

a. Appeal of a position classification decision shall be in accordance with rule 11—52.5(80GA,ch145) and the contested case provisions of Iowa Code chapter 17A.

b. The appellant (including all appellants in the case of a group hearing), an employee who is the appellant's representative, and employees directed by the appointing authority to attend the classification appeal hearing by the appointing authority or the director shall be in paid status for the time spent at and traveling to and from the hearing during their regularly scheduled hours of work. In addition, only employees directed by management to attend the hearing shall, if eligible for overtime compensation, be in paid status for the time spent at and traveling to and from the hearing outside of their regularly scheduled hours of work.

c. The appointing authority shall not authorize mileage or the use of a state vehicle for employees to attend or participate in a classification appeal hearing, except for those employees who are directed to attend the hearing by the appointing authority or the director.

d. A permanent employee whose position has been reclassified downward and who alleges that the position classification process has been used to circumvent a reduction in force as provided for in rule 11—60.3(80GA, ch145) may appeal in writing to the director. Right of appeal shall expire unless filed with the director within 14 calendar days following the date on the final position classification notice or, in the event of a classification appeal hearing, the classification appeal committee decision notice. If the director finds for the appellant, the appointing authority shall either submit a reduction in force plan or reassign duties to the appellant sufficient to retain the appellant's prior position classification.

61.2(2) Reserved.

61.2(3) *Appeal of examination rating.* Following examination, an applicant may file a written appeal to the employment appeal board in the department of inspections and appeals for a review of the rating received on the examination for the sole purpose of assuring that uniform rating procedures were applied consistently and fairly. Right of appeal shall expire unless filed with the board within 30 calendar days following the notice of the examination results.

A rating on an examination may be corrected if it is found by the employment appeal board that a substantial error has been made by the department. The correction of a rating shall not, however, affect any certifications or appointments already made.

61.2(4) *Appeal of disqualification, restriction, or removal from eligible lists.* An applicant who has been disqualified or whose name has been restricted or removed from an eligible list in accordance with rule 581—5.2(19A) or 581—6.5(19A), or who has been restricted from certification in accordance with rule 581—7.7(19A) may file a written appeal to the employment appeal board in the department of inspections and appeals for a review of that action. The written appeal must be filed with the board within 30 calendar days following the notice of disqualification, removal from the eligible list, or restriction from certification. The burden of proof to establish eligibility shall rest with the appellant.

When an appeal is generated as the result of an action initiated by the department, the department shall be responsible for representation. When an appeal is generated as the result of an action initiated by an appointing authority through the department, the appointing authority shall pay the costs of the appeal assessed to the department and shall participate in representation as requested by the department.

If the applicant's name is restored to an eligible list, it shall not affect any certifications or appointments already made.

61.2(5) *Appeal of grievance decisions.* An employee who has alleged a violation of 2003 Iowa Acts, chapter 145, or the rules adopted to implement 2003 Iowa Acts, chapter 145, may, within 30 calendar days after the date the director's response at the third step of the grievance procedure was issued or should have been issued, file an appeal with the public employment relations board. A nontemporary noncontract employee covered by merit system provisions who is suspended, reduced in pay within the same pay grade, disciplinarily demoted, or discharged, except during the employee's period of probationary status may, if not satisfied with the decision of the director, request an appeal hearing before the public employment relations board within 30 calendar days after the date the director's decision was issued or should have been issued. However, when the grievance concerns allegations of discrimination within the meaning of Iowa Code chapter 216, the Iowa civil rights commission procedures shall be the exclusive remedy for appeal and shall, in such instances, constitute final agency action. In all other instances, decisions by the public employment relations board constitute final agency action.

61.2(6) *Appeal of disciplinary actions.* Any nontemporary, noncontract employee covered by merit system provisions who is suspended, reduced in pay within the same pay grade, disciplinarily demoted, or discharged, except during the employee's period of probationary status, shall bypass steps one and two of the grievance procedure provided for in rule 11—61.1(80GA,ch145) and may file an appeal in writing to the director for a review of the action within 7 calendar days after the effective date of the action. The appeal shall be on the forms prescribed by the director. The director shall affirm, modify or reverse the action and shall give a written decision to the employee within 30 calendar days after the receipt of the appeal. The time may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties. If not satisfied with the decision of the director, the employee may request an appeal hearing before the public employment relations board as provided in 11—subrule 61.2(5).

61.2(7) *Appeal of reduction in force.* An employee who is to be or has been laid off or who has changed classes in lieu of layoff, and who alleges that the reduction in force was used to circumvent the rights of appeal provided for in subrule 61.2(6) or subrule 61.2(1), paragraph “a” or “d,” may file an appeal with the director within 30 calendar days following receipt of the notice of reduction in force to the employee from the appointing authority.

61.2(8) *Remedies.* All remedies provided in rule 11—61.2(80GA,ch145) must be exhausted pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.19, subsection 1, prior to petition for judicial review.

11—61.3(80GA,ch145) *Informal settlement.* The director or an appellant may request that an informal conference be held to determine if a dispute can be resolved in a manner agreeable to all parties prior to a contested case hearing. If the director and the appellant agree to negotiate a settlement, the various points of the proposed settlement shall be included in a written statement of facts. Negotiations for a settlement shall be completed at least five workdays prior to the date of the contested case hearing, unless additional time is agreed to by the director, the appellant and the public employment relations board, the department of inspections and appeals, or the classification appeal committee, as applicable. The settlement shall be binding when approved and signed by both the director and the appellant.

These rules are intended to implement 2003 Iowa Acts, chapter 145, section 61.

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CHAPTER 62

Reserved